Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully asserts that the present application is fully in condition for allowance. If any issues remain that may be addressed by a phone conversation, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the phone number listed below.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: 6/7/01

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the specification:

This invention relates to **[sustances]**substances capable of modulating the interaction between viral proteins capable of binding to intracellular lipid globules, cellular adipocyte-specific differentiation-related protein and intracellular lipid globules. The invention also relates to assays for identifying such substances and the use of these substances in affecting viral infection.

In the Claims:

1. **(Amended)** A method for identifying a substance **[capable of affecting]** which inhibits **[a viral]**an infection or the result of an infection of an animal or human cell targeted by hepatitis C virus or any other virus which uses lipid globules, **[which]** said method **[comprises]**comprising:

a) providing a lipid globule targeting sequence, as a first component;

b) providing a lipid globule, as a second component;

c) contacting the two components with a substance to be tested under conditions that would permit the two components to interact in the absence of the substance; and

d) determining whether the substance disrupts the interaction between the first and second components;

wherein the targeting sequence comprises a hepatitis C virus (HCV) core protein or a fragment, **[derivative]**, variant or homologue thereof wherein said fragment, variant or homologue binds to the lipid globule.

2. **(Amended)** A method according to claim 1 wherein the substance to be tested is administered as a peptide to a cell, the lipid globule targeting sequence is recombinantly or naturally expressed in said cell and the lipid globule is a natural constituent of said cell.

3. **(Amended)** A method according to claim **[1]** 2 further comprising:

e) **[administering]** contacting a virus or infective viral polynucleotide with **[to]** a cell, wherein viral polynucleotide enters the cell in the absence of said substance which has been determined to disrupt the interaction between the first and second components;

f) **[administering]** contacting a virus or infective viral polynucleotide with **[to]** a cell, wherein viral polynucleotide enters the cell in the presence of said substance and

g) determining if said substance reduces or abolishes the susceptibility of the cell to **[viral infection or]** the effects of viral infection.

4. **(Amended)** A method according to claim 1 wherein the lipid globule targeting sequence comprises amino acids of the HCV core protein selected from the group consisting of 125 to 144 **[and/or]**,161 to 166, and the combination thereof **[of the HCV core protein]**.

5. **(Amended)** A method for identifying a substance for treating or preventing **[a]** the effects of an **[viral]** infection of an animal or human cell targeted by hepatitis C virus or any other virus which uses lipid globules, which method comprises:

determining whether said substance can upregulate expression of adipocyte-specific differentiation related protein (ADRP) in a mammalian cell, by the following:

administering said substance to said mammalian cell; and

identifying whether the administration of said substance upregulates expression of adipocyte-specific differentiation related protein (ADRP).

6. **(Amended)** **[A]**The method according to claim 1 wherein the **[viral]** infection is a hepatitis infection **[or other viral infection of the human or animal liver]**.

17. **(Amended)** **[A]**The method according to claim 5 wherein the **[viral]** infection is a hepatitis infection **[or other viral infection of the human or animal liver]**.